



The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority Administrative Policies and Procedures

BUS CARD AND BUS CARD FEE POLICY FOR SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines for the Authority's policy regarding the issuance of Bus Cards and Bus Card Fees for Seniors and for People with Disabilities.

II. POLICY OVERVIEW:

A. POLICY STATEMENT

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) has implemented programs for elderly and disabled persons in order to assist the elderly and disabled in fulfilling their transportation needs.

All persons age 65 and over are eligible for the RIPTA Bus Card for Seniors. All persons with qualifying disabilities are eligible for the RIPTA Bus Card for Individuals with Disabilities.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. Elderly Person - All persons 65 years of age { Federal Transit Act; 49CFR609}
2. Disabled Person - Those individuals who by reason of illness, injury, congenital malfunction, or other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability, including those who are non-ambulatory wheelchair-bound and those with semi-ambulatory capabilities, are unable without special facilities or special planning or design to utilize mass transportation facilities and services as effectively as persons who are not so affected. {Federal Transit Act, 53 USC, Section 5307; 49CFR609.3}
3. Attendant\Escort – A person traveling as an aid, such as a personal care attendant, to facilitate travel by a person with a disability or a person age 65 or older.

III. POLICY & PROCEDURES:

A. HOW TO OBTAIN A RIPTA BUS CARD IF YOU ARE A SENIOR

1. Eligibility Requirement
 - A). All persons age 65 and over
2. Valid identification that includes proof of your age must be presented. Acceptable forms of identification include *any one* of the following:
 - a) Medicare Card
 - b) Birth Certificate
 - c) RI Driver's License;
 - d) State Identification Card
 - e) Passport
 - f) Green Card
 - g) Citizenship Papers
 - h) Hospital Card, if it shows date of birth

B. HOW TO OBTAIN A RIPTA BUS CARD IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY

1. Eligibility Requirement
 - All persons certified as having a disability.
2. Certification may be obtained in the following ways:
 - a) By showing proof that you are receiving a disability benefit. Valid identification includes any one of the following:
 - Medicare Card
 - Current (within the past year) Social Security Disability Award Letter, Benefit Verification Letter, or Cost of Living Adjustment Notice (Letter must indicate the individual is receiving disability benefits)
 - Veteran Administration Letter with a disability rating at or above 70%, or
 - Letter from Employer or Employer's Disability Insurance provider with a disability rating at or above 70%.
 - b) By providing a letter from a Social Service Agency that certifies that you have a disability. Currently, approved organizations are:
 - Easter Seals Society
 - Muscular Dystrophy Association

- Multiple Sclerosis Society
- RI Hospital Hearing and Speech Center
- RI Infantile Paralysis Society
- School for the Deaf
- Services for the Blind
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- United Cerebral Palsy

C. ATTENDANT/ESCORT

1. Qualifying seniors and disabled persons who require another person to accompany them in order to travel on a RIPTA bus can have this attendant/escort travel with them at no charge.
2. Any person that qualifies for a bus card (either as a senior or a disabled person) may indicate the need for an attendant/escort at the time of certification. Approval may be obtained in the following ways:
 - a). Any person that qualifies for a Bus Card for disabled people where their disability either requires the person to use a wheelchair or any person that is blind or visually impaired automatically qualifies for use of an attendant. A Bus Card (in the disabled category) indicating use of an assistant will be issued automatically. *{Rhode Island General Laws 39-18-4 (7)ii+iii}*
 - b). By completing an **Attendant/Escort Application Form**. All questions on the application must be answered completely and verified by your physician/health care professional. RIPTA will notify you within 21 days of receiving your completed application whether you qualify or not.
 - c). A revised Bus Card, indicating the use of an attendant, will be mail to anyone who qualifies.

D. WHERE TO OBTAIN BUS CARDS FOR SENIORS AND THE DISABLED

1. RIPTA ID Office located at 1 Kennedy Plaza in Downtown Providence
2. The RIPTA Mobile Unit visits locations outside of Providence for the convenience of elderly and disabled persons who reside outside of Providence. For information regarding the location and frequency of the mobile unit site visits contact the RIPTA ID Office at 401-784-9524 or visit our website at www.ripta.com.

E. COST AND EXPIRATION DATE OF BUS CARDS FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED PEOPLE

1. New and Renewals

a) Bus Cards for SENIORS and PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Effective February 01, 2009 the Bus Card Fee is \$10.00, and will Increase \$3.75 each calendar year until January 2013, at that time the Bus Card fee will be \$25.00 for New and Renewals and will remain \$25.00 thereafter.

Calendar Year	02/01/2009 To 12/31/2009	01/01/2010 To 12/31/2010	01/01/2011 To 12/31/2011	01/01/2012 To 12/31/2012	01/01/2013 Thereafter
Cost	\$10.00	\$13.75	\$17.50	\$21.25	\$25.00

* Expiration Date - Valid for 5 years from original issue or renewal date

2. Replacement Bus Cards:

In order to obtain a replacement bus card you are required to return the damaged bus card. In the event a bus card is lost or stolen, a replacement bus card will be reissued upon notification to RIPTA. Bus Cards replacement fees for seniors and people with disabilities will be as follows:

1. \$10.00 the first replacement
2. \$15.00 the second replacement
3. \$20.00 the third replacement and thereafter

IV. RECIPROCAL ELIGIBILITY FOR OUT-OF STATE INDIVIDUALS:

- A. An out-of-state individual seeking to use RIPTA's fixed-route services may be certified by another transit system. Eligibility is presumed and reciprocal services will be provided if an individual presents certification from another transit system. In these cases a temporary (for a Disabled Person or a senior) Bus Card will be issued, and will be valid for twenty-one days from the date of issuance. {FR 37.127}
- B. If an out-of-state individual plans to use the system beyond the twenty-one days he or she must obtain RI certification

V. PROGRAM EXEMPTIONS {Rhode Island General Laws 39-18-4(7)}:

A. The following services are not covered under the Bus Card and Fee Policy for the Senior and Disabled Bus Card Program:

1. Special Services
2. Charter Service

VI. REFUSING SERVICE:

A. Any RIPTA Bus Card for seniors or the disabled must be kept in the possession of the qualifying senior or disabled patron at all times while riding RIPTA fixed-route services.

B. The RIPTA Bus Card for Seniors or People with Disabilities must be presented when boarding RIPTA Buses

C. RIPTA reserves the right to confiscate any Bus Card for a Senior or a Person with Disabilities that has been used improperly, e.g., utilization by another individual, or any violation of RIPTA's "Senior and Disabled Bus Card and Bus Card Fee Policy." A confiscated card will not be returned or replaced for a period of one year. After a period of 1 year, the individual or holder of a confiscated Bus Card may reapply to the Bus Card Program for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities.

D. Service for any passenger can only be refused if a rider engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct. Seriously disruptive behavior does not include behavior or appearance that only offends, annoys, or inconveniences other riders or employees. {FR 37.5(h)}

VII. POLICIES SUPERSEDED:

This policy supersedes any and all policies, and practices previously promulgated and or followed with regard to issuance of Bus Cards and Bus Card fees for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities.